



Why We Are Where We Are On The US 411 Connector

The Georgia Department of Transportation strives to bring projects of value and significance to the citizens of this state and all who use Georgia's infrastructure. Numerous factors comprise the decision making process in bringing a project to fruition, but one thing is consistent – all proposed projects must have a clearly defined need and purpose, and the design solution must satisfy its purpose for 20 years.

The current US 411 Connector project started in 1993 as a regional mobility and connectivity initiative along with congestion relief benefits. The region had a growing population, important business base that included manufacturers with freight movements and a need for improved travel options from Rome to Interstate 75.

In fact, easier access to the Georgia ports and to Hartsfield Jackson International Airport was a driving consideration in the 411 Connector project advancing to the environmental process. The project is a federally funded project which means full federal authority and oversight of all work related to the project. Project costs would be paid with eighty percent federal dollars and twenty percent state funds-

An Environmental Impact Study was undertaken in accordance with federal laws and regulations, and was reviewed and approved by state and federal agencies. The Department's analysis was based on sound engineering principles, environmental impact analysis and objective comparison of the alternatives to satisfy the intended need and purpose of the project. The entire environmental process is a tool for decision making. The whole progression was transparent and open to the public, and included websites, a hotline telephone number, newsletters, flyers and focus groups with the impacted communities.

Multiple public information meetings were held detailing the project alternatives, and a 27-member Citizens Advisory group established. Ultimately, in 2009 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reached a Record of Decision supporting the Environmental Impact Statement which determined the preferred route of US 411, Route D-VE.

Challenges to the project and certain circumstances such as new environmental requirements have slowed the project. As such, Georgia DOT has made numerous adjustments and will continue to do so in an effort to ensure the project's purpose can be achieved. Along the way, all federal rules and requirements have been followed and will continue to be followed.

Currently, the Department is conducting a reevaluation of the environmental impact based on other routes at the Dobbins Mine area. The goal is to complete that work by the end of this year, such that impacts and mitigation may be assessed and forwarded to FHWA for review and concurrence.

Planning and constructing any large infrastructure project is often a long journey with many challenges and the Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, connected, and environmentally sensitive transportation system that enhances Georgia's economic competitiveness.

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